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WASHINGTON, DC - U.S. Congressman Mike Pence gave the following speech from the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives shortly before the vote on the Democrats' national energy tax plan:

"It's hard to know where to start. I got to think, Madame Speaker, a lot of people looking in on this debate, hearing about copies filed and esoteric process really don't care very much about all that, because this economy is hurting. American families are struggling under the weight of the worst recession in a generation. Families in my district are losing their jobs. Small businesses and family farms are struggling. And all they've seen out of Washington, D.C., so far is a gusher of runaway federal spending, deficits and debt and bailouts. They didn't think it could get worse.

"But here we go. In the midst of the worst recession in a generation, this Administration and this majority in Congress are prepared to pass a national energy tax that will raise the cost of energy on every American family. Now, my colleague sporting the green lapel button, who I greatly respect, said that there is a lot of dispute about how much the average American household will pay if this national energy tax becomes law and that's true. There are estimates ranging from a few hundred dollars a year to the Heritage Foundation's over \$4,000 a year.

"The estimate I prefer was from candidate Barack Obama who said in January of 2008 to the San Francisco Chronicle and I shall quote with the deepest respect, 'Under my plan of cap and trade system, electricity rates would necessarily skyrocket.' That will cost money. 'They,' referring to the utility companies. 'They will pass that money onto consumers.'

"Now I know earlier this week the President of the United States said that polluters are going to pay the cost of this national energy tax. That's not what he said last year.

"Now, I don't know how y'all define skyrocket. When the President said electricity rates would necessarily skyrocket under my cap and trade plan, but I'd be prepared to defer to you. I define skyrocket as a prescription for economic decline. There may be a dispute of the numbers of how much I'll be paying in my electrical bill or how much the cost of goods and services are going to go up, but there's no dispute that this cap and trade legislation will cost millions of American jobs.

"Raising the cost of energy is a bad idea in prosperous times. Raising a national energy tax in the worst recession in a generation is a profoundly bad idea. But for anyone looking in, let me say we are in the minority as we have been reminded with some firmness in this debate on occasion today.

"We don't have the votes to stop this bill. But you do. If you oppose the national energy tax, call your congressman right now. If you think we can do better to serve the interests of the American people and achieve energy independence with an all of the above strategy, call your congressman right now. Alexander Hamilton said it best: 'Here, sir, the people govern.' We can stop this bill. We can do better, and so we must."